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LIFE AND LETTERS

"THE Budget passed through the House of Lords after a debate marked by a scathing exposure of the Government's tactics by the Leader of the Opposition." Thus the *Daily Telegraph* of Friday morning. And following, the *Daily Telegraph* devoted a column and a half of leaded type, not to the discussion of the political situation, but to the "wonderful performance" of M. Paulhan, who, it appears, has been "swooping like a condor through the last sixty miles of air . . . brilliantly ahead of all rivalry." This is the *Daily Telegraph*, and this is England. The House of Lords passed Mr. Lloyd George's Budget without opposition. That is to say there was no division, and, in plain terms, the Lords have thrown up the sponge and turned tail. The Finance Bill is now law; it will come into operation forthwith, and we shall see what we shall see. THE ACADEMY has always prophesied that the Lords would never pass Lloyd George's Budget until the people of England had blessed it and approved it. We deny that this Budget has been approved by the people of England. We believe that the plain duty of the Lords was to have exercised their veto once again and brought Lloyd George and his Bill to a further trial in the constituencies. The Lords in their wisdom have shirked the battle. Another General Election would put the country to turmoil and expense, and so we must bow our crested heads and tame our hearts of fire. We do not observe that there has been any pronounced crowing over the event in the Liberal Press. The Finance Bill is passed. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill may have cracked a private bottle in celebration of the fact; but Mr. Asquith is not cock-a-hoop about it, and neither are the wiseacres of the Liberal Press. And the reason, of course, is not far to seek. The Lords' failure of duty and ignominious retreat from a perfectly sound, solid, and common-sense position is a matter to be deplored. On the other hand, while it does discredit to the Lords, it will not materially benefit the Government. We believe that this Budget has never been a sincere measure. It was put up like other wild-cat Liberal schemes which might

be named with the pure intention of forcing the House of Lords into a difficult and harassing position. It has served its purpose only too well, and having served its purpose, it is really of no further use to the honest Liberalism of the Treasury Bench. Messrs. Asquith, Lloyd George, Churchill, and the rest of them would be only too glad if it might now be shelved, destroyed, and forgotten. But it has passed into law, and our friends must now prepare themselves for the inevitable hoisting of their own petard which is bound to follow. Mr. Asquith can see faithfully reflected in this Bill his own ruin. It will destroy him and his following as surely as night follows day. What is more, it should bring utter ruin and obloquy on the imperious Mr. Redmond. So that while we must weep for the unfaithfulness of our captains, we can still rejoice over the imminent doom of the enemy. In every town and village of England and Scotland, not to mention Wales and Ireland, the operation of the Finance Bill will come as an educational treat to the mob who have shouted for it, and to the apathetic multitudes who have been too lazy and indifferent to shout against it. Both sections of the community will squeal heartily when the shoe begins to pinch, and they will consign Lloyd George and his fellow banditti to the bottom of the deep blue sea—metaphorically speaking, of course. THE ACADEMY is not imbued with an overweening admiration for the brewing interest. But the fact remains that the gentlemen whom the *Star* collectively describes as "King Bung" constitute a powerful body of persons. From time immemorial this same "King Bung" has been greatly to the fore when elections were concerned. He has a powerful, rich old party—and, if you like, beery—voice, and in the end, and despite the Rechabites, he can make himself heard. From the point of view of Bung the Budget is an iniquitous and abominable measure. It will touch him severely in his fat pockets, but he has a pocket left out of which he will not scruple to produce retaliatory funds. What is more, he has a head on his shoulders, and if he is to be ruined he will not go down after the manner of the lamb or the Lords. Already he has laid a scheme for the winding up of Mr. Redmond and the Irish party. It is a simple scheme, but it will drive Ireland to fury, and Messrs. Redmond and Co. will be well advised to become naturalised Englishmen at once—that is to say, of course, if they value their skins. Mr. Lloyd George has told the mob that his Budget is the first step towards the abolition of poverty from England. It is on the strength of this specious and dishonest promise that the mob have sent back to power Mr. Asquith and his Government. When the true effect of the Finance Bill upon the country makes itself clearly apparent, as it shortly will do, Liberalism will go entirely out of fashion. We must bide our time and dree our weird. The mob, which has forced the hand of Mr. Asquith and daunted the Upper Chamber, is a fickle monster; and you cannot play with it for ever. The present Government has roused in its breast some of the worst of its passions, but the very worst of them still lies dormant. It is nevertheless there, however, and when it wakes we can promise Mr. Lloyd George one of his far-famed football matches.

Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener would appear to be a difficult General to fit with a place. After a period of roving he would seem to have been appointed "High Com-

missioner in the Mediterranean" with a base at Malta. It seems singular that for such a soldier, and such "a man of business," the country has no work which appeals more beautifully to the imagination. There is India; there is Egypt; there is even Canada; but none of these is for Lord Kitchener. He must needs content himself at Malta, doubtless with Gozo and Comino thrown in, and the empty title of High Commissioner in the Mediterranean. What is the matter with him? Or perhaps more pertinently, what is the matter with the War Office?

The Newspaper Press Fund has held its forty-seventh annual dinner, and the usual array of talent assembled to make pleasant and inspiring speeches. Of course, the usefulness of such a fund may be taken for granted, and if the speeches of the Earl of Crewe and Lord Burnham and Sir Rufus Isaacs were decked out with the usual feeble witticisms and the usual fusty platitudes we must not complain too bitterly. We gather that after dinner a matter of £2,000 was subscribed to the fund. And we note among the list of contributors Mr. Eugen Sandow, fifty guineas, and Mr. Henry Lowenfeld, twenty-five pounds. Mr. Eugen Sandow is the "physical culturist" who advertises so largely and so flamboyantly in the columns of the Press. Mr. Sandow has the approval of Mr. Labouchere, and he is privileged to print that gentleman's portrait and immortal words of recommendation in his advertisements. If we mistake not, however, Mr. Henry Lowenfeld is the well-known bucket-shop keeper or outside broker of that name, and it is a little astonishing to find him in the same charitable galley with Lord Burnham and the Earl of Crewe. We suppose that from a charitable point of view one man's money is as good as another's. Besides, Mr. Lowenfeld's connection with journalism is established by the fact that he once had the privilege of being partner in a bucket-shop business in Waterloo Place with the great and only Mr. Frank Harris of fur-coat fame, whose lucubrations on Shakespeare's women are to appear in Mr. Alfred Mond's *English Review*.

We note that in the course of his speech to the assembled "nuts" or "heads" of journalism and letters the Earl of Crewe was careful to trot out the ancient gag about the Newspaper Press Fund's conduct of its operations "with a great deal of privacy." This same boast of privacy is made every year, and it also crops up annually at the dinners of the Royal Literary Fund. Every journalist and every man of letters has his own view as to privacy in these matters. We do not wish to suggest that either the Newspaper Press Fund or the Royal Literary Fund is unwisely or improperly administered. But we are certainly of opinion that a great deal too much stress is laid upon privacy. Where are the actual working journalists who have obtained benefits from the Newspaper Press Fund? One never meets them, and it is so with the broken authors. We are aware that neither of these funds is excessively rich, and that a little money cannot be expected to go a very great way. But we believe that a great deal more money could be raised by both organisations if they were to publish the names of the persons to whom grants have been made. The names of persons who receive grants from the Civil List are published, and no

shame is thought of the recipients of those grants. We believe that the privacy upon which the Newspaper Press Fund and the Royal Literary Fund so pride themselves is really a defect in the system of administration. A list of grants made and a list of grants refused should be published annually, and should be available for inspection at the offices of the society. Such a list could hurt nobody, and it would at least have the effect of preventing a certain number of unworthy applications. And with regard to the Royal Literary Fund in particular we think that some reform in this direction might be instituted with advantage at once. We also think that it is ridiculous that the fund should be practically inoperative for three or four months in the year, as it is at present. Of course, the advocates of privacy, who have as yet had matters all their own way, are wont to assure you that the hardships and troubles of unsuccessful authors are so lurid that they will not bear the light of publicity. There is a great deal of difference, however, between privacy as to the facts of an author's misfortunes and privacy as to his name and the amount of his grant, or to his name and the refusal of his grant. The Civil List gets rid of the difficulty by attributing eminence or necessitous circumstances to every recipient of a grant or pension. Why should not the Royal Literary Fund do the same? As it is, there is no appeal from the committee to the actual subscribers. What is good enough for the authorities who administer the Civil List should be good enough for the committee who administer the Royal Literary Fund.

We take the following remarkable extract from the *Daily Telegraph* of Tuesday:

In the court in which Mr. Justice Darling was engaged yesterday the hour of four had passed when Mr. Lush, K.C., looked at the clock and then at the judge, remarking that he did not know how long his lordship would sit.

His lordship smiled and replied, "How long has the House of Commons decided we are to sit?"

By the side of Mr. Lush sat Mr. Simon, K.C., M.P. "Ask Mr. Simon," added his lordship.

Mr. Simon smiled, but evidently thought silence was golden. He was not the only member of Parliament present. Mr. F. E. Smith, K.C., was there, as well as Mr. Bottomley.

But these legislators ventured no opinion as to the view of the House of Commons on judicial hours of labour.

Then Mr. Justice Darling continued: "I don't know that I have got any right to sit at all. While I went to luncheon a member of the House of Commons showed me a Bill in which I see it is proposed to the House that nobody shall sit on the Bench until he is 75 years of age.

Despite the wonted gravity of his lordship, the spectators who crowded the court laughed heartily. Monotony of judicial routine is sometimes relieved in this court—number eight—by a witticism from the Bench, and the usher exercises a rare discretion in the use of the word "Silence." Those present thought that this remark of his lordship was made in jest.

Mr. Justice Darling immediately explained that this was a wrong view to take of his utterance. "I am not joking," he added, "and as I have not reached,

by a long way, that judicial age, I don't know whether I ought to go on with this case. Perhaps we shall have to adjourn for some years."

The discussion did not proceed further, and his lordship adjourned.

Of course, such a "story" belongs by good right to the columns of the *Daily Mail*. The touches respecting "the wonted gravity" of Mr. Justice Darling and the "rare discretion" of the usher "in the use of the word 'silence'" are worthier of the great morning haporth than of the great morning pennorth. And if Mr. Justice Darling was not joking when he expressed a doubt as to whether he ought to go on with the case before him because he had not reached the age of seventy-five years, what was he doing? We cannot suppose that what took place has been properly reported.

The great experiment in cheap novels is once more upon us. New full-length novels, bound in cloth, and suitably embellished, have been issued by an enterprising publishing house, and the first authors to come up to the two-shilling scratch, as it were, are Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. Anthony Hope, between whom the publishers have sandwiched a Mr. J. C. Snaith, with whose works we do not profess to be acquainted. It is not to be assumed that in lending themselves to two-shilling business Messrs. Wells and Anthony Hope have abated one jot or tittle of their ordinary market rates or terms. We should suppose that both gentlemen got their substantial payment down on account of a substantial royalty, and that the real racket is to be stood by the publisher. The novels have been published, and consequently we can hurt nobody by recording the opinion that they will not be found remunerative from the publisher's point of view. When all is said, the number of novel-readers in the country is limited. Not only so, but the followings of popular authors are more limited still. Mr. Wells and Mr. Hope possess publics of their own, and doubtless very large publics, but we should imagine that the public of, say, Miss Marie Corelli or Mr. Hall Caine is much larger—a fact, of course, which is not discreditable either to Mr. Wells or to Mr. Hope. We do not see how Messrs. Nelson can possibly make a profit on the sale of under a hundred thousand copies of each of these authors. Will Mr. Wells sell a hundred thousand copies or will Mr. Hope? It is a question which nobody can decide until long after the event. The publishers have naturally taken care that the volumes should be well displayed in the bookshops and well advertised in the public Press. Two shillings as the price of a new novel looks tempting, but we believe that the avid novel-reader would just as soon pay six shillings, and that the person who has no particular fancy for novel-reading will decline to be lured on by reductions in price. However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and while we hope that the publishers will be accorded a hearty meal, we have our doubts. In any case, not all authors belong to the Wells-Hope category in the matter of sales. We doubt if the average respectable writer of fiction touches three thousand copies. Three thousand copies at two shillings would mean starvation to the author and bankruptcy to the publisher. We have never been able to understand why the publishing trade has of late years displayed such a deep-seated anxiety to injure and destroy itself. The notion that the people who read decent books wish to economise over them in the grasping and unworthy sense is an entirely baseless notion. A good book can be sold just as well and to a better profit for ten

shillings and sixpence or for thirty-one shillings and sixpence as it can be sold in cheaper forms. There is no advantage in cheapening a thing which has value.

We do not suggest that the particular publishers who have embarked upon the two-shilling novel experiment would stoop to the sweating of authors. On the other hand, there are publishers who will sweat not only authors but everybody concerned in the handling of books, provided they can increase their profits thereby. The two-shilling novel is not likely to become a standard article with this class of publisher. At the same time it will serve their turn as a further weapon for the reduction of the market price of manuscript fiction. The author will be told that the two-shilling novel is cutting up the trade, and that consequently the customary advance, paltry though it may be, must be once again cut down. In a recent public correspondence it has been made plain that there are publishers in London whose price for novels by authors favourably known to the subscription libraries, and of respectable reputation in the book shops, is not more than thirty pounds. We believe that there are plenty of women writers especially who will turn out a passable novel for such a sum, and be grateful for the job; and it seems to us that if a novel is to be published at two shillings the publisher will be hard put to it to pay more. It has to be remembered, however, that the author who accepts such a trifling sum for, say, three months' hard work, is invariably buoyed up with the hope that the book itself will prove a success, and that on the strength of that success better prices will be forthcoming. The two-shilling novel would, in our opinion, make an end of that flattering hope, and when hope is gone there is little left in authorship. We have always contended that the whole question of literary rewards lies in the hands of the people who do the writing. Mr. Wells is perfectly aware of his value in the market; so is Mr. Anthony Hope. Each of them can command at six shillings adequate and handsome payment for his labour. Why should they lend themselves to schemes which may possibly prove detrimental to their less fortunate, or, it may be, even less worthy, brethren? We should have thought that the Authors' Society, which has been described by Mr. George Bernard Shaw as a trade union, would have something to say in the matter. Apparently, however, the Authors' Society is helpless, and in spite of his trade unionism the eminent author remains a law unto himself. We do not see why the minor writers of fiction, who are pretty numerous, should not combine to form a trade union of their own, which would regulate in some sort the prices which are to be accepted for novels. There can be no doubt that a publisher's main profits are not made out of eminence, but out of the middling, respectable, steady-going writer. One, or at most two, big names in a list is quite sufficient for the average publisher. Out of those big names he may, in fact, make no profit at all. When you come to pay a thousand pounds down and 33 per cent. for a novel, you are taking a certain risk, and you may only just get your money back, or you may fall short of your outlay. But when you pay only a hundred down and a royalty of 15 or 20 per cent. you are a poor publisher if you cannot make a fifty-pound note for yourself out of the deal. And the publication of twenty novels, which will bring in fifty pounds profit each in the year means an income of £1,000 per annum. There are publishers whose dreams run to £20,000 a year and houses in

Berkely Square. The safe men, however, dream no such dreams; and if the two-shilling novel comes in, some of the safe men will have to go out, which will be a pity.

We shall not be surprised if the two-shilling experiment makes havoc of the present season's trade, so far as the lesser authors are concerned. If Mr. Anthony Hope can publish at two shillings, why should Mr. Wellington Love-tale demand six shillings? Besides, a bookseller with a shopful of two-shilling novels is going to push them off at all hazards and to the detriment of the small seller. The stacked book is bound to be sold by hook or by crook; the book which is stocked in twos and threes is a small matter. If the publishers wish to be really drastic, two courses are open to them. They should publish only the works of authors of standing, and either increase the price of novels or bring them out in paper covers for a shilling. Then we should discover where we really are. As matters now stand the theory is that the bookseller deals in new authors by favour to the publishers. He buys the popular author in quantity and takes a few of the new and small-selling work as a sort of side experiment. The results are peculiar and various. Perhaps one in a hundred of the unestablished writers catches on and makes a success. Of the rest probably ten achieve passable small sales and the balance are nowhere. Still, the present system gives every man his chance in a rough-and-tumble way, and on the whole it has worked fairly well for letters. The effect of the two-shilling novel on the arrangement is not difficult to foresee, and we must confess that the prospect does not greatly please us.

The random chronicler "V. V. V." of the *Sphere* has been at it again. Here is a choice paragraph from the current week's chronicle:

Who is the funniest man now on the stage? In a discussion on this question to which I listened recently the first place was won, I am glad to say, by Alfred Lester, although Mr. Pelissier, George Robey, and George Graves ran him close. The quality for making laughter is, of course, a matter for personal appraisal; but when it comes to acting there are universal standards, and Mr. Lester is so much a better actor than these others by reason of his fidelity to the fact. He never says anything out of character, as they all do. So much for the first place, but who came second? It was by general consent one of those three; but my own choice—and I stood quite alone—was different. I put Alfred Lester first and Fred Kitchen second. Who is Fred Kitchen? they all wanted to know. Reader, I advise you to find out.

It seems to us but yesterday that "V. V. V." was swearing by the high Muses that the funniest man on the stage was Mr. Harry Lauder, and that the sight of a certain conjuror throwing up brass balls seemed to him so beautiful that it invariably moved him to tears. Mr. Alfred Lester is not by any means the funniest man on the stage; neither is Mr. Fred Kitchen—who, by the way, must not be confused with Lord Kitchener. But it seems to us that after Mr. Seaman, of *Punch*, "V. V. V." is rapidly becoming the funniest man in journalism. Mr. Seaman has lately attributed the success of certain eminent persons to their entire lack of the sense of humour. We wonder if it has ever occurred to Mr. Seaman that *Punch* is successful because it is really the most dismal and depressing three-pennyworth which the Empire can boast.

SONNET

When all my life's unruly ways be trod,
And at Death's gate I stand to render toll,
When all my body is widowed of the soul,
And this hot heart lies cold beneath the sod,
O how shall I, uncovered and unshod,
Endure the tale of that recording scroll?
And where's the hyssop that shall make me whole?
To stand unshamed before the face of God?

Yet, though through devious path and dark defile
I wander stumbling and with aimless feet,
Surely I yet shall find a meadow green
Where I may rest and breathe calm air awhile:
Surely I yet shall find a river sweet
To wash my limbs till ev'ry speck be clean.

G. H.

THE BANK CLERK AND THE EMPIRE

FROM the *Saturday Review* we take the following:—

When the Duke of Connaught reached Cairo Sir Eldon Gorst received him in a travelling cap and a rough motoring dress. It is true this costume was appropriate to the vehicle which conveyed him to the station, for he came on a motor bicycle. Could anything be more discourteous, on the one side, to the brother of the Sovereign, or more foolish on the other, if we consider the necessity of maintaining some dignity in the eyes of a race which sets so much store on appearances? But this is only one example, a glaring one, of a course of conduct consistently opposed to the usual observances of decent society. It is neither good form nor good policy to attend race meetings in putties and travelling cap, to refrain consistently from attending religious worship, and openly to profess atheism and speak contemptuously of the religion of one's own countrymen. Mere common-sense and decent feeling inculcate outward respect for the creed of your country when abroad, even in an official occupying a humble position. Perhaps the flat profession of anti-militarist sentiments openly made by the representative of Great Britain may be doing more harm still. The climax of indecency and impropriety, even in Sir Eldon Gorst, was surely reached shortly after the report of a certain speech by Mr. Lloyd George was published. Sir Eldon gave a banquet at which most of the notables of Cairo were present, and the German Consul was the guest of honour. The host remarked to that gentleman, in a tone loud enough to be heard by all, that he admired Mr. Lloyd George's speech, and that the British were not a fighting nation and must soon lose the command of the sea, and that all our colonies and Oriental possessions would become independent. The German probably took all this nonsense at its true value; but what must have been its effect on the natives present? To do the Chancellor of the Exchequer justice, he has never in his wildest moments in wild Wales said anything half so outrageous.

And in justice to Sir Eldon Gorst, we reproduce what is said of him with his own sanction in "Who's Who":—

Gorst, Sir Eldon, K.C.B., *cr.* 1902; C.B., 1900; British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt since

1907; b. New Zealand, 25 June, 1861; s. of Right Hon. Sir J. Gorst (q.v.). Educ.: Eton; Trinity College, Cambridge (M.A., 20th Wrangler). Attaché in Diplomatic Service, 1885; 3rd Secretary, 1887; 2nd Secretary, 1892; Secretary of Legation, 1901; Controller of Direct Taxes to Egyptian Government, 1890; Under-Secretary of State for Finance, 1892; Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, 1894; Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, 1898-1904; Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1904-7; received Grand Cordon of the Order of the Mejidieh, 1897, and Grand Cordon of the Order of the Osmanieh, 1903. Decorated for Egyptian services.

The two pictures compare prettily. The *Saturday Review* picture suggests in striking tints the swanking, comfortable hooligan in high office; the *Who's Who* picture depicts for us the studious, solid, meritorious son of a studious, solid, meritorious father plodding manfully through the Legations and ultimately and worthily possessing himself of the Egyptian diplomatic plum or date. We should be very sorry to drag pure personality into the grave questions which have been brought to a head by Sir Eldon Gorst's alleged extraordinary view of the dignity of his position as British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt. But it is obvious that there is something materially wrong with Sir Eldon Gorst, and that the wrong something is not the result of his training or upbringing, private or public, but of his private and individual nature or personality. Here you have a case of an English youth born of respectable, if not over-brilliant, parentage. He may be presumed to have lived in an atmosphere of decent politics from his boyhood up. He is sent to Eton, and he proceeds thence to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he distinguishes himself as a respectable, none-too-brilliant scholar may be expected to distinguish himself by becoming 20th Wrangler. Then he enters the Diplomatic Service, and doubtless begins to accumulate experience. He is appointed to solid positions, and apparently specialises in taxation and general finance. We imagine him in the middle of his career, as it were, as a bespectacled, stoop-shouldered, long-bodied, Whitehall official, with a head for figures, a passion for punctual attendance at his office, a soothing method with his official superiors, and a grim and anxious determination to get on. In the fulness of time his most startling ambitions exhibit a tendency to materialise. He receives the honour of knighthood and writes K.C.B. after his name, and he is chosen to succeed Lord Cromer—surely the doughtiest of British Agents and Consuls—in the difficult and onerous Agency and Consulate General of Egypt. Who in the name of all that is conventional could have imagined or prophesied that inside three years the *Saturday Review* would be in a position to take this respectable, solid, worthy, honorific young man from his gilt framed and twopence coloured chiaroscuro and put him forward for us in the penny plain guise of a slip-along, atheistical, anti-militarist, little-England Englishman, tuff-tuffing through the land of the Pharaohs on a motor-cycle officially to receive the Duke of Connaught in a travelling cap and a rough motor-ing dress? We can well understand the *Saturday's* indignation on the subject; for such conduct in a responsible British Consul is obviously calculated to make the flesh creep and the hair rise. And the joke of it all is that somebody who knows has written to the *Saturday* in the following terms:

Sir Eldon's reception of the Duke of Connaught in

unsuitable attire, mounted upon a motor-cycle, would be difficult of disproof were it not for the fact that he does not possess such a conveyance, and that his reception of his Royal Highness in the usual functional garb was witnessed by some thousands of persons. As regards Sir Eldon's putties, blasphemous conversation, and absence from Divine worship, they are each and every one as complete fabrications as the motor-bicycle. Touching the speech alleged to have been made by the Agent-General to the German Consul and Cairene notables, announcing the impending dissolution of the British Empire, it is as mythical as the "banquet" at which it is supposed to have been delivered.

So that here we have flat and particular denial against equally flat and particular assertion. Naturally, in the face of these denials, the *Saturday* does not persist in its allegations; although it does not unreservedly withdraw them or express sorrow; and knowing what one does know of the true inwardness of public life, one may expect that the matter will now drop and be forgotten. For persons possessed of a mild interest in the welfare of the Empire, however, important issues arise. Is Sir Eldon Gorst in any sense the man which the *Saturday* paints, or is he not? The *Saturday's* precise "facts" may be all wrong. Sir Eldon Gorst may not possess a motor bicycle; he may not have attended an official reception in rough motoring dress; there may have been no "banquet," and if there was no banquet Sir Eldon Gorst certainly could not have indulged in unpatriotic remarks to the German Consul at that banquet. It may also be untrue that Sir Eldon is an atheist or fails to put in the conventional attendances at church which we may or may not have the right to expect from highly placed Government officials. We have no desire in the world to press charges which have been categorically denied by a person who, for good reasons, may be considered to speak with the authority and warrant of Sir Eldon. But it would interest us to know whether in this matter we have really something in the nature of smoke without fire. We cannot believe that the *Saturday Review* would wantonly level baseless charges against any public official, or for that matter against any private man. The *Saturday Review's* contributor stands accused of gross and foolish falsehood, and the *Saturday's* only comment on the subject is that the charges have been met by "a number of vigorous negatives which really prove nothing." It is all very well to say that a negative proves nothing, particularly if you happen to have been caught in the act of retailing untruths. But as the *Saturday* is not willing to accept the view that the "vigorous negatives" in question prove anything, but leave the charges where they were, we think that the onus of proof still lies with the *Saturday*. If the *Saturday* possesses any proofs they should not be concealed from the public; neither should they be left in a condition of suppression or be dismissed with "ifs" and "buts." The issue is, can it be shown that Sir Eldon Gorst has been habitually unmindful of the honour and credit of the King and of the Empire? Has he conducted himself in a flippant, indecorous, and improper manner? Is his conversation infected with sedition and a contempt for the power of Britain? Is he, in short, an honest, reasonable, and competent official, or is he not? The recent complications in Egyptian affairs are obviously of the gravest kind. They might easily be accounted for in the manner in which the *Saturday* has accounted for them; and, looking at them closely, it is difficult to see how they can be accounted for in any other way. They point to a

distinct slackening of the rein and distinct weakness, ineptitude, and want of solid sense on the part of somebody, and it seems to us that that somebody should be Sir Eldon Gorst. The private behaviour of an official in Sir Eldon's peculiar position is really a public affair. In itself it is just as trivial a concern and of just as little moment as the behaviour of any other man. But taken in its quality as the behaviour of the British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and in its relation to the unedifying condition of the affairs of Egyptian government at the present moment, it becomes a grave and serious consideration. Attacks upon British officials are not popular in British officialdom. Nine times out of ten such attacks are strangled at their birth by "vigorous negatives," "pressure," and a general gathering round of "good friends." But the *Saturday* has put its hand to the plough with regard to the conduct of Sir Eldon Gorst and we are assured that the "vigorous negatives" prove nothing. Consequently it behoves the *Saturday* to continue with the implement. Meanwhile, we must wait and see. We have our own opinion on the general question, and, leaving Sir Eldon Gorst entirely out of the picture for the moment, we are of opinion that there has of late crept into the camp of authority a pronounced and pernicious disposition to regard the government of the Empire as a great deal of a joke, and to play into the hands of good, fat, peaceful people at home whose sole principle of statesmanship is of the "rule-by-love-rather-than-by-fear" stamp. What is got by the sword must, if necessary, be kept by the sword. And, in any case, what is got by hard sense and competence cannot be retained by slackness, foolishness, faddism, and ineptitude. There can be no question in the world that the differences between Lord Cromer and Sir Eldon Gorst are as the difference between cheese and chalk. Lord Cromer did wonders in Egypt and Sir Eldon Gorst has not precisely performed miracles. It is obviously high time that his administration was properly overhauled and looked into, and he must stand or fall by the consequences of investigation and not depend upon the bare word of his friends.

THE POET OF THE FUTURE

Our young friend the *Literary Post* is forging into literary affairs with the impetuosity and devil-may-care zeal of the English flying man. Up to now our contemporary has "had a go" for pretty nearly all the big literary questions—the Press and Advertising, the Library Censorship, the Poet Laureateship, the Cheap Novel, and so forth. And we may say of these flights that if they did not actually begin at Wormwood Scrubs they have very nearly ended in Manchester; for the thought of the *Literary Post* is, on the whole, what one might term Manchester thought—that is to say, cottony, provincial, and a little damp and dismal. For the benefit of humanity and with a close eye to the advancement of letters among the penny cognoscenti we have more than once advised the editor of Mr. Nash's organ to do what he could for poetry. He is now in his seventh number, and we regret to have to say that he is still without a poet. This, of course, is the Manchester way; there are no poets in Manchester, and sage and shrewd and full of money as the people of Manchester may be, they still lack the spirit which will prompt them to put up money for the importation of a child of the Muses. Of course, the *Literary Post*, like Manchester, is not at all averse from the next best thing, namely, the discussion in some sort of that

unfortunate article, poetry. And, as a very thrilling *Daily Mail* brand of flight, we find our contemporary coming forth in No. 7 with a column and three-quarters entitled "A Poet of the Future." It goes without saying that all lovers of literature are most anxious to hear about poets of the future. On any day of the week they will spring quite a penny for news and tidings of such portents. The editor of the *Literary Post* is acquainted with this fact, and we are not unjust to him when we describe him as a good journalist. And now let us regard wistfully for a moment the *Literary Post's* poet of the future. It is notable at the outset that the person who introduces or presents to our kind notice this poet of the future is none other than Lady Margaret Sackville, who, we believe, was the first president of the Poetry Recital Society. Her ladyship is a young woman of some parts, and she has managed wittingly or unwittingly to attract to herself a great deal more notice than those parts warrant. It is not astonishing that she should have impressed the *Literary Post*. She writes and talks in the true Manchester way, and the *Literary Post* no doubt believes that she is in the high movement and calculated to advance the interests of the *Literary Post*. Lady Margaret's poet of the future rejoices in the name of Ronald Campbell Macfie, a name which it may be objected savours of Glasgow rather than of Manchester. We must not, however, overlook the fact that Manchester begins with a capital "M," and so does Macfie. And now for Lady Margaret—Margaret also commencing with a capital "M." "It is time that the term 'minor poet' [again that "M" for minor and "M" for Manchester] should be discarded. It carries with it too many disgraceful associations. Some inspired new word is needed by which the less great shall be distinguished from the greatest. At one time 'minor poet' may have been good enough, but it has become soiled and cheapened. It is like 'young lady' and all kindred appellations, which have gradually lost all claim to respect." Here, of course, Lady Margaret Sackville gives us news from nowhere, unless it be Manchester. It would be interesting to know who it is that has "soiled and cheapened" the term minor poet, and why the minor poet "has lost all claim to respect." Lady Margaret informs us that she would willingly leave "minor poet" the property of those who write their ineffectual verse, principally owing to the fact that they do not possess a sense of humour."

This is obviously a nasty one for the poet members of the Poetry Recital Society, not to mention the Poets' Club. Quite properly Lady Margaret goes on to patronise the word "poetaster," and to inform us that "W. B. Yeats, Wilfrid Blunt, and William Watson" ought not to "be classed under a heading so rife with deplorable suggestion." "Such as these," adds her ladyship, "should not suffer from a word, nor have a slur cast on them on account of the sins of others," which is Manchester again, and the blank and hackneyed truth. After so solid a preamble, Lady Margaret is not to be blamed for bringing on her real poet, which she does in the following good set terms:

There is a poet, but little known as yet, I believe, who is one of those whom one would particularly like to see sheltered from any such misunderstanding. This is Ronald Campbell Macfie, who has produced two slender books of verse and one fine ode published separately. The delicacy and vision of his work were recognised on publication, but in these days, when so much appears of almost equal excellence, verse, unless it is of the highest, or connected with an already established reputation, is apt to be

quickly forgotten. It is interesting, therefore, to dwell a little emphatically on any fine production, since there are always some who will be grateful for having the expression of a new and sincere personality brought before their notice.

More Manchester, and, with the substitution of countless other names for that of Ronald Campbell Macfie, precisely what we have heard before on countless occasions. Only a little while ago we had the vociferous Mr. Chesterton proclaiming a Mr. Figgis for a poet of the future in the same Mancunian strain. Figgis enjoyed his week-end, as it were, to the top of his bent, and retired into his native obscurity. He was a business man, as well as a poet of the future, and he flew nearly as far as Manchester. Now he flies no more; his aviation shed is empty; his aeroplane is scrapped; his lamps have gone out; his engine won't work; his shrine is deserted; and Chesterton shall oft repair to do some private winking there. It is observable that when your poet of the future swims into the startled ken of his admirers, it is always on a machine which will not bear description; one hears a great deal about the poet and about what ought and ought not to be done to him, and about his "promise," and his "genius," and his "modesty," and his future; but we are never entertained to any large selection of his poetry. The people who raved about Figgis were most careful to quote little bits of Figgis. To have quoted him in the lump would have been fatal, both to Figgis, the fair, and his fulsome followers, and even a discoverer of poets of the future must exercise a certain consideration for his own neck. And here, again, in the case of Macfie, we find his gentle champion giving us a monstrous deal of puff to a very scanty supply of sample goods. All that Lady Margaret Sackville can find it in her heart to quote out of the whole of Macfie's stupendous works is the following:—

"If I were Sleep
With scythe to reap,
Like faded flowers
The weary hours
Of withered day—
If I were Sleep
With dreams to keep
And give away—
If I were Sleep
And God should say,
'Go down to her you love to-night,
Go down and lay
A dream upon her eyelids white!'
What dream of wonder and delight
Would I convey
If I were Sleep
With dreams to keep
And give away!"

Now, here, at the best and highest you have suitable verses for a cheap valentine. Macfie has rhymed prettily, and his verses skip like a Board School child in the third row of a pantomime ballet. If there is anything to be said at all in favour of "If I were Sleep" it is that the lines have about them just a faint and very thin echo of Swinburne. We would undertake to get twenty sets of verses just as pretty, just as trivial, just as treacly, and just as suggestive of Swinburne let down to nothing from twenty school misses now engaged in the pursuit of knowledge at Margate or in the neighbourhood of Manchester. Yet of these lines, or, at any rate, of the poet of these lines, Lady Margaret Sackville writes as follows:

For much of the pleasure we get from poetry, not necessarily great poetry, is a fresh impression of life reflected in an unfamiliar and sensitive mind. The

poetaster is opaque, and reflects nothing or at best a blurred and meaningless picture. But the poet's soul is like a living pool, perpetually alive with lovely and ever-changing images. So it is in Mr. Macfie's work, and we find in it, too, that music which is only drawn from those on whom the winds of life blow direct—a music in the cases of some thin and frail, like the notes of an æolian harp, but always the true and always a melody never before heard. This poet's work is interesting to analyse because of the rare personality of which it is the outcome—a personality which manifests itself in verse delicate, austere, a little remote from humanity, and yet human, through which leaps and burns a vivid thread of undeniable passion. Many of the poems taken separately remind one of flowers gathered at day-break on the slope of a high hill, some white, some glowing with deep colour, but all perfumed and all with the dew on them. They possess an extraordinary simplicity of expression, the result of an entire sincerity. Here is utter unselfconsciousness, no evasions, and no parade of emotion; they are spontaneous and limpid as a mountain stream.

We have no recollection of having seen Macfie's volumes, but we must take it that Lady Margaret Sackville has not culled from them the worst she could find, and that as "If I were Sleep" is the only excerpt upon which she ventures, she would be disposed to justify her ecstasy of praise with "If I were Sleep." Perhaps Lady Margaret has never heard of Swinburne's lines commencing—

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad and singing weather,
Blown fields and flowerful closes,
Green gladness and grey grief,
If love were what the rose is
And I were like the leaf.

If Lady Margaret Sackville had prefaced these lines with the preface she bestows upon the lines of Macfie she might have held up her critical head and walked her ways without fear and without reproach. But we put it to her as an honest poetess, if on reflection and in comparison of Macfie with Swinburne she has any good critical ground for writing of Macfie with such marked and unblushing enthusiasm. And we put it to the editor of the *Literary Post* whether in printing such a farrago of ridiculous encomium he is doing his duty by letters or by poetry, or even his duty to the benighted and besotted penny patronisers of the high Muses. We assert that to hold up "If I were Sleep" as the work of a poet of the future—that is to say, as indicating in itself that we have in Macfie a poet who belongs to the succession, and whom it is our duty to recognise as a person of poetical genius—is a piece of flagrant literary impertinence and a plain attempt to impose upon the helpless chuckle-head who is so anxious to keep himself *au fait* with the inner heart of things for a penny. Judging Macfie from Lady Margaret Sackville's sample we should say that "minor poet" is absolutely the correct appellation for him, and that unless the poets of the future are to be all minor poets, Macfie has no more right to be called a poet of the future than President Roosevelt or the *Daily Mirror* bear. This is not to say that Macfie does not possess his gifts or that he has failed to think a little pretty thought. "If I were Sleep" is a trifle, and probably the poor Macfie himself is well aware of the fact. It seems to us highly probable that Lady Margaret Sackville's poet of the future is

simply a tremulous cabbage-white butterfly, with no intention in the world other than to enjoy while he may the nasturtiums and china asters and double stocks of the suburban gardens of Manchester; that he enjoys the sun and is in mighty fear of the showers, and that when he finds himself impaled on the acute bodkin of Lady Margaret Sackville, with a sign underneath in her ladyship's fair Italian hand,

"This is a Lion"

he will wish that he had never been born. It is possible, of course, that we may be entirely wrong about Macfie. We can conceive that "If I were Sleep" is the worst thing he ever wrote, in which case Lady Margaret Sackville has just as much to answer for and just as much to be sorry about. As for the *Literary Post*, words fail us, because when all is said and done it would seem that the editor must have known, as Lady Margaret Sackville plainly knows, that Macfie is really not a swan. After the pretentious heading about poets of the future, and after the fine writing as to early morning flowers with the dew on them, and after "If I were Sleep" itself we are treated subtly to the appended depreciation:

Of Mr. Macfie's two volumes, "Granite Dust" and "New Poems," the latter is most characteristic. The former, in spite of the many beautiful things it contains, such as "To James Matheson," "A Day in June," "Kisses," "With a Gift of Roses," "White Heather," and many others, has a certain inequality of inspiration which quite disappears from the later volume. "New Poems" are almost invariably fine, maintaining a surprising level of delicacy and sweetness, and over all is a white light as of dawn streaked with rosy cloud.

Probably the chief fault of this poet is an occasional over-profuseness. Some of the longer poems are inclined to straggle like a luxuriant creeper and need pruning. "To the Queen of England," for instance, and "To Save my Soul," both in "New Poems," would gain by condensation. There is also a danger of verse so transparent becoming at times a little thin—occasionally (very rarely) through its very simplicity it falls into triviality. There is still some element wanting to raise it into a very high rank of poetry. What this is it is difficult to define. Yet, reading Mr. Macfie's work, you feel that strange things are possible, and that any moment some sudden and unexpected wave of song may lift him at once to some summit where none but he has a right to stand.

We say it with regret, but it cannot be denied that pigs might fly, at any rate as far as Rugby, if they had wings.

REVIEWS

POET, PUBLISHER, AND PLAYWRIGHT

Robert Dodsley, Poet, Publisher and Playwright. By
RALPH STRAUS. (John Lane. 21s. net.)

No less an authority than Boswell suggested that Dodsley's life ought to be written, "as he had been so much connected with the wits of his time, and by his literary merits had raised himself from the station of a footman"; and here is a full, exhaustive, and final biography of that versatile person. Robert Dodsley's claim to remembrance to-day is his connection with "the wits" and his own

sterling character. "You are a lucky man," wrote Burke to him on one occasion, "and meet friends wherever you go." He was everybody's friend, and a serviceable, bourgeois personality—self-respecting, honest, and unaffectedly humble.

He was born at the close of the year 1703 (O.S.). He was apprenticed at an early age to a stocking-weaver in Mansfield, where he was badly treated, and, it appears, ran away. At an early period of his settlement in London he was footman to Charles Dartiquenare, that "born epicure," as Swift calls him, and about 1728 became footman to the Hon. Jane Lowther, daughter of the first Viscount Lonsdale. His life cannot have been a pleasant one among his "brother skips," judging by some verses, in which he describes the time when he stands waiting at dinner as the only pleasant hour of the twenty-four:—

"For while I unregarded stand
With ready salver in my hand,
And seem to understand no more
Than just what's call'd for, out to pour;
I hear and mark the courtly phrases
And all the elegance that passes."

In 1732 appeared the fruits of that pleasant hour of liberal education in the "Muse in Livery; or, The Footman's Miscellany," a collection of simple verses, together with a subscription-list which contains over 200 names, and a preface which is a masterpiece of humility: "What can be expected from the pen of a poor footman," he writes, "a character that expresses a want both of friends, fortune, and all the advantages of a liberal education or a polite converse." The assistance of Pope enabled Dodsley to open a shop, and his first venture, in 1735, was one of his patron's works. He had a small success, too, as a playwright, which few can have grudged him; and the number of his friends and patrons increased, so that he gradually laid up a small fortune, which enabled him in later years to retire from the "Tully's Head."

From 1738, when his "London" was published, Johnson seems to have been on intimate terms with "honest Dodsley," or Doddy, as he preferred to call him. To have been instrumental in the publication of two of Johnson's poems, and to have set him at work upon the famous Dictionary, speak much for Dodsley; but even were his other publications forgotten, he would be remembered by two remarkable ventures, his "Old Plays" and his "Poetical Miscellany." This great collection of poems was brought to a close after ten years, and it was with considerable pride that he tells us in the postscript to the sixth and last volume that he had "endeavour'd to select and preserve the best." There is little noteworthy in Dodsley's life after his retirement from business.

As it was a play, "The Toyshop," which was instrumental in embarking him upon his career as a bookseller, it was the production of the tragedy of "Cleone" which ultimately caused his retirement from his shop. The play had an unexpected—and undeserved—success. Gray confesses he did not go to see it for "fear of crying," and Johnson—

"Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong"—

declared that if Otway had written this play no other of his pieces would have been remembered. Perhaps its author was its most ardent admirer, for Johnson tells us that "Doddy, after the danger was over, went every night to the stage side and cried at the distress of poor Cleone." In spite of its success, "Cleone" is lost in the limbo of forgotten things, and there is no line among Dodsley's poetical works worth preserving. He is an indifferent poet, and Mr. Straus is mistaken in saying that Dodsley is the author of "at least one song which is near immortality, 'One kind kiss before we part.'" Dodsley was the child of his age. He was the author of a dreary poem in blank verse, called "Agriculture," which was the first instalment of a book to be called "Public Virtue," which, fortunately, was never finished. Dodsley proposed, in case of success, to write two further books dealing with commerce and the arts respectively! It is curious to find

the author of such uninspired verse claiming inspiration as lightly as Herrick the assistance of his "good spirits."

"Sure some sacred impulse stirs my breast.
I feel—I feel an heavenly guest within!
And all obedient to the ruling god,
The pleasing task which he inspires pursue."

But the bad poet was a good publisher. He was not, indeed, a perfect publisher, for he was first and foremost a tradesman, or, as Mr. Straus mildly says, "it must be admitted that he never allowed his personal interest in a manuscript to warp his commercial judgment." He refused to publish Percy's Ballads, he refused Collins's Odes. But the man who was patronised by Pope, the man who first published for Johnson and Gray, and who introduced Burke to half the world, is certainly entitled to some recognition, and the monument of a biography.

MUSIC.

Unmusical New York. By HERMANN KLEIN. (John Lane. 3s. 6d.)

MR. KLEIN has a mission, and he is quite sure about it. "I have allotted to myself the rôle of 'candid friend' in this instance, because I am the right person to play it. I simply know that there are things to say which ought to be said." He makes his case, which is that New York is not, as the New York critics declare, the "greatest musical city of the world," but lacks the highest qualities of taste and judgment, and suffers from the lack of a central musical institution corresponding to European conservatoires. The book is somewhat diffuse.

Musical England. By W. J. GALLOWAY. (Christophers. 3s. 6d. net.)

MR. GALLOWAY's object in writing "Musical England" is to assist the efforts of those who are working for the establishment of National opera, and his book is a useful and reliable survey of the musical condition of England at the present day. His contention is that the public, both in London and in the provinces, is, as a whole, really appreciative of worthy musical enterprise in many fields of music, and that there is therefore a wide and appreciative public ready for opera at popular prices.

The Story of Opera. By E. MARKHAM LEE. (The Walter Scott Publishing Co. 3s. 6d. net.)

This story of the opera is a useful and concise textbook giving some account of the development of every notable school of opera. The author is, perhaps, too discreet in his criticism, for he will hardly give judgment upon any composer more modern than Balfe, because "one cannot speak with any certainty as to what is ephemeral and what is enduring. Our times are too close on us." The appendices are useful; but surely in giving the tabulated State grants in Appendix B, it is a mistake to say that it is "perhaps not generally known how badly off England is in this matter as compared to other countries." The fact that English opera is not State-supported is certainly universally recognised in England.

STEVENSON AND HOGG

In 1824 the Ettrick Shepherd published his "Confessions of a Justified Sinner" through Messrs. Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green (how I love the old world roll of the old world name). Hogg published anonymously for fear of the Kirk. The book fell almost dead from the Press, was quickly forgotten, or rather never came into remembrance, and, for many years past, has been almost unobtainable as a separate book. Fully sixty years afterwards (in 1886) Robert Louis Stevenson published his "Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" through Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co. The book at once leapt into fame, and is still extremely popular. It is certain that Hogg never saw Stevenson's work, and also certain that Stevenson never saw Hogg's work; yet the two books resemble each

other so closely that they form perhaps the most curious of all literary coincidences. In style they are as different as the Poles, and the resemblance is in no way dependent upon plagiarism. It lies far deeper, and shows how two Scotch minds, even minds as different as those of Hogg and Stevenson, obtain the same effects when writing upon the same theme. Hogg was no Stevenson, and Stevenson was no Hogg.

Both books treat of a double personality. The machinery used by Hogg is a demon, and the impossibilities he imagines are clumsily set. The machinery used by Stevenson is a drug, and the impossibilities he imagines are set with his usual neatness. Both books begin with a preliminary narrative of the events described as witnessed by bystanders, and both books conclude with the written confessions of the hero who had caused the events. Both books tell a story of sin, including murder and suicide, and in both books the evil personality excites strong dislike in all honest people who see him.

Let us illustrate these and other points by extracts.

HOGG.—George saw a lad with black clothes and a Methodistical face, whose countenance and eye he disliked exceedingly, several times in his way. . . . Next day the same devilish-looking youth attended him as constantly as his shadow; was always in his way as if to impede him, and ever and anon his deep and malignant eye gave a glance so fierce that it startled him. . . . Next day George and his companions had not well taken their places for tennis till the lad appeared in his old station again. His presence acted as a mildew on all social intercourse or enjoyment. The game was marred and ended ere it was well begun. The players separated and met again in the afternoon. They had not played five minutes till he was stalking in the midst of them again, and totally impeding the play. In short, to whatever place of amusement George betook himself and however well he concealed his intention of going there from all flesh living, the other was there also darting looks at him that chilled his very soul. They were looks that cannot be described; but they were felt piercing to the bosom's deepest core. They affected even the onlookers. George became utterly confounded to know how this unaccountable being knew all his motions and every intention of his heart. Even when at worship in the High Church the persecution continued. There George's courage was fairly mastered; he was obliged to look down during the remainder of the service.

"I never in my life saw any human being," said Mrs. Calvert, "whom I thought so like a fiend."

"He was always repulsive and every way repulsive," said Mrs. Logan, "but even he is now altered greatly to the worse."

STEVENSON.—Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish. He gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation. He had a displeasing smile. . . . but not all of these points together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him. . . . "We wish to see Mr. Hyde's room," said the lawyer. A flash of odious joy appeared upon the woman's face. "Ah!" said she, "what has he done?" The lawyer and the inspector exchanged glances. "He don't seem a very popular character," observed the latter. . . . "He was small," said Dr. Lanyon, "and I was struck besides by the shocking expression of his face and with the odd subjective disturbance caused by his neighbourhood. There was something abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence of the creature that now faced me. I kept my ordinary manner as far as the horror I had of my visitor would permit me."

Again:

HOGG.—The beautiful little pistol was so perfect, so complete and so ready, that I longed to use it. I loaded it with my own hand as Gil-Martin did the other, and we took our stations behind a bush of hawthorn and bramble almost close to the walk.

Almost immediately, the clergyman, old Mr. Blanchard, appeared. He came deliberately on, pausing at times so long that we dreaded he was going to turn. He was a boardly, ill-shaped man of a rude exterior and a little bent with age. He seemed conscious of being all alone and conversant only with God and the elements of His creation. Never was there such a picture of human inadvertency! A man approaching step by step to the one who was to hurl him out of one existence into another, approaching with as much ease as the ox goeth to the stall. When he came straight opposite us, Gil-Martin cried "Eh!" The old man, without starting, turned his face and breast towards us and looked, but over our heads. My companion fired, but without effect, which was altogether wonderful, for the old man's breast was within a few yards of him. "Hilloa," he cried. "What is that for, you dog?" With that he came forward to look over the bush, and I fired. The old man first stumbled to one side and then fell on his back. We kept our places, and I saw my companion's eyes gleaming with an unnatural joy. The wounded man raised himself to a sitting posture. I saw his eyes swimming, and heard him say, "Alas! Alas! Whom have I offended that they should have been driven to an act like this? Come forth and show yourselves that I may either forgive you before I die or curse you in the name of the Lord." He then fell agroping with both hands on the ground as if feeling for something he had lost, manifestly in the agonies of death; and, with a solemn and interrupted prayer for forgiveness, he breathed his last.

Hogg's "Sinner" confesses to other murders, but the foregoing should suffice. Compare it with the murder by "Hyde."

Never (the maid used to say) had she felt more at peace with all men or thought more kindly of the world than on that brilliant moonlight night. While gazing from her window she saw an aged and beautiful gentleman with white hair, drawing near along the lane and another and very small gentleman advancing to meet him. Just under her eyes the older man bowed and accosted the other with a very pretty manner of politeness as if he were only enquiring his way. The moon shone on his face as he spoke and the girl was pleased to watch it, it seemed to breathe such an innocent and old-world kindness of disposition, yet with something high, too, as of a well-founded self-content. Presently her eye wandered to the other and she recognised him as a Mr. Hyde who had visited her master and for whom she had conceived a dislike. He had a heavy cane in his hand, with which he was trifling; but he answered never a word, and seemed to listen with an ill-contained impatience. Then all of a sudden he broke out in a great flame of anger, stamping with his foot, brandishing the cane, and carrying on like a madman. The old gentleman took a step back, with the air of one very much surprised and a trifle hurt; and at that Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds and clubbed him to the earth. And next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway. At the horror of these sights and sounds the maid fainted.

Then take the following descriptions:—

Hogg.—Chancing to awaken very early one morning George rose to go to the top of Arthur's Seat, to breathe the breeze of the dawning and see the sun arise out of the Eastern ocean. The morning was calm and serene; and as he walked down the south back of the Canongate, towards the Palace, the haze was so close around him that he could not see the houses on the opposite side of the way. As he passed the lord-commissioner's house, the guards were in

attendance, and they cautioned him not to go by the Palace, for all the gates would be shut and guarded for an hour to come, so he went by the back of St. Anthony's Gardens into that little romantic glade adjoining to the Saint's chapel and well. He was still involved in a blue haze, like a dense smoke, but yet in the midst of it the respiration was most refreshing and delicious. The grass and the flowers were laden with dew; and, on taking off his hat to wipe his forehead he saw that its black glossy fur was covered with a tissue of the most delicate silver—a fairy web, composed of little spheres, so minute that no eye could discern any one of them; yet there they were, shining in lovely millions. Afraid of defacing so beautiful and so delicate a garnish, he replaced his hat with the greatest caution, and went on his way light of heart. As he approached the swire at the head of the dell—that little delightful verge from which in one moment the eastern limits and shores of Lothian arise on the view—as he approached it, I say, he beheld to his astonishment a bright halo in the cloud of haze, that rose in a semi-circle over his head like a pale rainbow. He was struck motionless at the view of the lovely vision.

So far Hogg. The phenomenon described is often seen by early risers on a dewy morning. Benvenuto Cellini describes it in his autobiography, but I think the Shepherd is the first Scotchman who put it in print; and he goes on to say that when George reached the top of Arthur's Seat to utter his amazement and supreme delight, he found that this sublunary rainbow, this terrestrial glory, was spread in its most vivid hues beneath his feet. He could not yet perceive the body of the sun, although the light behind him was dazzling; but the cloud of haze lying dense in the deep dell that separates the hill from the rocks of Salisbury, and the dull shadow of the hill mingling with that cloud, made the dell a pit of darkness. On that shadowy cloud was a lovely rainbow formed, spreading itself on a horizontal plain, and having a slight and brilliant shade of all the colours of the heavenly bow, but all paler and less defined. This phenomenon of early morn is best described by the name given to it by the shepherd boys, "The little wee ghost of the rainbow." Hogg develops this phenomenon into something very like the spectre of the Brocken, but here the writer fears that he departs from nature and stretches a bow which is not the rainbow, though perhaps there is no reason why the Brocken Spectre should not appear on Arthur's Seat. Now for Stevenson:—

The street was small and what is called quiet, the shop fronts stood with an air of invitation, like rows of smiling saleswomen. Even on Sunday, when comparatively empty of passage it shone out in contrast to its dingy neighbourhood, like a fire in a forest; and with its freshly painted shutters, well polished brasses and general cleanliness and gaiety of note, instantly caught and pleased the eye of the passenger.

Two doors from one corner, a certain sinister block of buildings thrust forward its gable on the street. It was two stories high; showed no window, nothing but a door on the lower story and a blind forehead of discoloured wall on the upper; and bore in every feature the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence. The door, which was equipped with neither bell nor knocker, was blistered and distained. Tramps slouched into the recess and struck matches on the panels; children kept shop upon the steps; the schoolboy had tried his knife on the mouldings, and, for close on a generation, no one had appeared to drive away these random visitors or to repair their ravages. I was coming home from some place at the end of the world about three o'clock of a black winter morning, and my way lay through a part of town where there was literally nothing to be seen but lamps. Street after street, and all the folks asleep—street after street, all lighted up as if for a proces-

sion, and all as empty as a church—till at last I got into that state of mind when a man listens and listens and begins to long for the sight of a policeman.

In both books the hero suffers extreme mental agony.

Hogg.—My state both of body and mind was now truly deplorable. I was hungry, wounded, and lame, an outcast and a vagabond; miserable, forlorn, and dreading every person that I saw either behind or before me, I hastened on towards Edinburgh. . . . I flew out the way towards Dalkeith so swiftly that I often lost sight of the ground, and I said to myself, "Oh, that I had wings of a dove that I might fly to the furthest corners of the earth to hide me from those against whom I have no power to stand." . . . I could not make out a sentence, but trembled to think I knew one of the voices at least, and rather than not be mistaken I would that any man had run me through with a sword. I fell into a cold sweat, and once thought of instantly putting hand to my own life as my only means of relief (may the rash and sinful thought be in mercy forgiven!) . . . Involuntarily did I turn round at the request, and caught half a glance at his features. May no eye destined to reflect the beauties of the New Jerusalem inward upon the beatific soul behold such a sight as mine then beheld! My mortal spirit, blood, and bones, were all withered at the blasting sight. I arose and withdrew, with groanings which the pangs of death shall never wring from me. . . . September 8.—Would that this were the last day that I should ever see in this detested world. My vitals have all been torn; and every faculty and feeling of my soul racked and tormented into callous insensibility.

STEVENSON.—Sitting close by the window, taking the air with an infinite sadness of mien, like some disconsolate prisoner, Utterson saw Dr. Jekyll. "What, Jekyll!" he cried, "I trust you are better." "I am very low, Utterson," cried the doctor, drearily, "very low. It will not last long, thank God!" "You stay too much indoors," said the lawyer. "You should be out whipping up the circulation. Come, now, take your hat and take a quick turn with me." "You are very good," sighed the other, "but no, no, no, it is quite impossible. I dare not. But, indeed, Utterson, I am very glad to see you. I would ask you up, but the place is not fit." "Why, then," said the lawyer, good-naturedly, "the best thing I can do is stay down here and speak with you from where I am." "That is just what I was about to venture to propose," returned the doctor, with a smile. But the words were hardly uttered before the smile was struck out of his face and succeeded by an expression of such abject terror and despair as froze the lawyer's very blood. The window was instantly thrust down, but that glimpse had been sufficient, he turned and left without a word. . . . He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. Next moment I had sprung to my feet and leapt back against the wall, my mind submerged in terror, for there before my eyes, pale and shaken and half fainting, and groping before him with his hands like a man restored from death, there stood Henry Jekyll. . . . Terror woke up in my breast, as sudden and startling as the crash of cymbals; and, bounding from my bed, I rushed to the mirror. At the sight that met my eyes my blood was changed into something exquisitely thin and icy: Yes, I had gone to bed Henry Jekyll, I had awakened Edward Hyde. . . . Under the strain of this continually impending doom, and by the sleeplessness to which I now condemned myself, even beyond what I thought possible to man, I became eaten up and emptied by fever, weak both in body and mind, and solely occupied by one thought—the horror of my other self. No one has ever suffered such torments.

Finally, the hero in both books commits suicide.

Hogg.—September 18, 1712.—This is my last day

of mortal existence. Unable to resist any longer I pledged myself to my devoted friend that on this day we should die together. Farewell, world, with all thy miseries; for comforts or enjoyments hast thou none! Farewell, woman, whom I have despised and shunned; and man, whom I have hated. And thou, sun, bright emblem of a far brighter effulgence, I bid farewell to thee also! I do not now take my last look of thee, for not to thy glorious orb may a poor suicide's last earthly look be raised. The hour of repentance is past, and now my fate is inevitable. Amen for ever. . . . A man on the way for Edinburgh with lambs saw something like a man standing in a strange, frightful position at the side of one of the hay ricks. He called, but receiving no answer, went up to the spot and found it was a young man who had hung himself in the hay-rope that was tying down the rick. He had tied the rope in a knot round his neck, and then slackening his knees and letting himself down gradually, till the hay-rope bore all his weight, he had contrived to put an end to his existence in that way.

STEVENSON.—This is the last time short of a miracle that Henry Jekyll can think his own thoughts or see his own face (now how sadly altered) in the glass. Will Hyde die upon the scaffold or will he find the courage to release himself at the last moment? I am careless. This is my true hour of death, what may follow concerns another. Here, then, I seal up my confession and bring the life of Henry Jekyll to an end. . . . The besiegers, appalled by their own riot and the stillness that had succeeded, peered in. Right in the midst of the comfortable commonplace room lay the body of a man, sorely contorted and still twitching. They drew near on tiptoe, turned it on its back and beheld the face of Edward Hyde. By the crushed phial in the hand, and a strong smell of kernels that hung upon the air, Utterson knew that he was looking on the body of a self-destroyer. "We have come too late," he said, sternly, "whether to save or punish. Hyde is gone to his account."

These extracts speak for themselves, though they might be multiplied. Yet there is no question of plagiarism, for Hogg was dead before Stevenson was born, and Stevenson tells us that the idea of his book came to him in a dream. He wrote the manuscript twice. In the first draft Jekyll was to be entirely bad, so that the change to Hyde would have been one of form only. The alteration to the double personality, mental as well as bodily, increases the resemblance of Stevenson's book to Hogg's. W. M.

WIT AND LAUGHTER

ESSAYISTS, critics, and metaphysicians have for centuries exercised their subtlest "wit" and imagination in attempting to define the nature of wit and humour, but the most adroit and the liveliest of them cannot be said to have succeeded; and, perhaps, there is something slightly ludicrous in the attempt, just as there would be in the spectacle of an absent-minded Professor looking for a cap which he wore upon his own head, or for an object which he left behind him when he began his tour of exploration. Yet it is perhaps a little too sweeping to dismiss summarily all these speculations, which have their value; and moreover all seem to agree with but slight differences that wit consists in the sense of delighted surprise occasioned by the discovery of some real or apparent congruity or likeness in things which had seemed in all respects unlike and opposite—although these resemblances, as a rule, only exist in the fancy and are first put into them by the wit of the discoverer, so that it amounts merely to a trick the mind plays upon itself just as, to borrow an illustration from "Sartor Resartus" used for a different purpose, apples are found in dumplings and there are some minds to which it is a problem how the apples got

there—and that humour, on the other hand, is occasioned by the discovery of incongruity where it was unexpected. It is not intended here, however, to consider these definitions in minute particulars or even to quote them with scrupulous and legal-like accuracy, because, as it has been suggested, all such lucubrations are, except to a limited number of people, tedious; and in the case of wit and humour, it may be further hazarded, superfluous. For even although wit and humour be trapped and defined, we have but captured the substance and missed the essence, we have defined the cause but by no means accounted for the effect. In other words we should require a definition of that sudden illumination produced by this perception of wit, or in the case of humour of its concomitant, laughter. The cause in short here seems inadequate to produce or explain the effect. The cause can be defined only by its effects; hence, that alone can be regarded as wit which produces the coruscation of wit, and that alone as humour which produces the symptoms, if not the convulsive and muscular expression of laughter. Thus it is categorical and can only be defined by itself or as Democritus defined a man, as "that which we all see and know."

But, possibly, all intellectual attempts to define wit and humour in relation to laughter are as much a waste of human ingenuity as were the endeavours of alchemists to discover the philosopher's stone or of mathematicians and natural philosophers, until recently, to find perpetual motion. The final result of physical science on this subject was to prove perpetual motion physically impossible, and the final result of human reason will probably also demonstrate absolute definition or knowledge, on the subject of wit and humour, both superfluous and impossible. Or it may turn men back again to the beginning and show them that they have left behind what they went to seek, and have travelled like a man lost in the snow in a circle bringing him back to its beginning. It may be whimsically suggested that wit could only be defined by wit itself or wittily; by a definition which is also an illustration or demonstration. We require, in short, a definition which shall make us laugh by its success, not by its failure. It is, in fact, defined much better by the humourist who sets it in motion without attempting to define it than by the Solon who defines but does not attempt to give an original demonstration. Thus it is that an appeal has been made to the man of humour himself:

"Tell me, O tell, what kind of thing is wit,
Thou who a master art of it."

And yet the philosopher or metaphysician is exercising the same faculties—one might even say the same wit—as one who, without consciously seeking, suddenly glimpses the quality in a bright similitude, an apt metaphor, a new truth of relation, a provoking epigram, a retort uncourteous, or a sparkling jest. The difference is that the one by seeking does not find and that the other by not too diligently tracking her footprints and peeping into curious places does occasionally glimpse the smiling and shy muse or hear her delightful and mocking laughter. For wit, like pleasure, is coy and is not to be caught by being directly pursued; she must be captured like the coquette she is by a more or less feigned inattention. Wit and humour (at present no nice distinction need be observed, this being left to the metaphysicians, and they are considered here only in relation to laughter) will not be accounted for, because, perhaps, if they could be accounted for, we should not laugh. The quality is a kind of by-product of thought and experience, secreted without consciousness or registration and discovered only by its sudden escape, as our dream visitants are sometimes imagined to be seen by the waking eyes in the act of vanishing. It has no reality, no entity in nature as truth has. It is a nothing, a misdirection, a miss-fire among nature's serious aims. It is merely a mode, a trick of perception, a coincidence, an accident which somebody observes, and being discovered excites laughter

—because it is but an appearance or accident. It cannot exist in thought itself; it exists only in a kind of oblique or crooked vision or perverse comparison. It is, in Coventry Patmore's verse—

"—like little stars,
Whose faint impression on the sense
The very looking straight at Mars,
And only seen by confluence."

"Generally crooked reasoning" was Warburton's witty and therefore, perhaps, slightly crooked definition of the quality. By looking at a thing too intently and directly, or as it really is, one does not see the quality; one can only discover it through half-seeing eyes, or by indirection. It exists in the observer and in a certain singular, oblique, peculiar and ephemeral point of view, and never in the object itself. In speaking it comes in best as an aside, its very essence lies in parenthesis. No man ever became a humourist by setting out to become one, by going out with a gun and a desperate determination to bring home a bag, or by diligently settling down to dig for humour. No man was ever a humourist and nothing more. It is a principle of nature that he must first be something else, a poet, a philosopher, a man of affairs—and humour is achieved by a sort of inversion or perversion of his experiences. The world's best humour was not written by professed humourists; Shakespeare, Cervantes, Rabelais, Swift, Sterne, Dickens, Thackeray, were not mere jesters or professional fools, nor would they have been so even if they had only written their comic passages and interludes. Their fooling has the quality of that of Lear's fool or of the gravediggers in Hamlet. Every man has in himself a kind of fool attendant who accompanies him like Lear's through his grandest passions and whose jests are a kind of soliloquy from the outside upon his situation. All the best humourists have resented being regarded as humourists only or being confounded with their own fool, and Mark Twain was among their number. In illustration of the parenthetical and secret quality of humour it may be remembered that the American humourist confessed that he began "Tom Sawyer," came to an end of his humour, put it away, and half forgot it. Returning to the work some time later, he was able to complete it without difficulty. The subliminal reservoir had in the interval been unconsciously refilled. "While the fisher sleeps the nets take fish." The duality of a fool and a man of ideals and sober experience seems to exist in every humourist more or less pronounced; it is a kind of partnership between the fool and the knight, like that between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. The one is not complete without the other, and humour by itself cannot exist. The author of "John Inglesant," indeed, regarded humour as the attempt of the divine to enter into the common conditions of life, declaring that it arose from the wrestling of the lower and higher, the human and divine in man's mixed and mortal nature, and perhaps in a perfect state of being there would be no possibility of humour or laughter. All humour is, one indeed feels at some moments of intuition, a little comic and gross considered by itself, and in its pure character of humour even the most subtle and refined of it; and in a higher state of culture we should be ashamed of it just as a man of taste turns away with displeasure from the broad and vulgar farce which pleases less disciplined taste, or even pleased himself in his boyhood, and now requires it to be more seasoned with "wit" or wisdom. The delight which was at first so excruciating passing away leaves a lurking doubt or suspicion of the untrue and unpleasant, but a new jest or discovery of humour instantly dissipates this suspicion until it again engenders; and thus the oscillation of feeling continues. Of the ephemeral or evanescent character of humour no proof is required; it is self-evident. A jest or discovery either humorous or witty only exists in the moment of sharp and piquant surprise at its first appearance, and what remains is not its humour. In so far as it is humour and occasions laughter, it is a perception not of permanent or

intrinsic truth, but of the superfluous and accidental truth. It only exists in imperfect knowledge, in a sort of misunderstanding or mistake which the mind catches itself in the act of making. It is necessary to preserve this distinction between humour in its pure and last essence as expressed by laughter and that which occasions it, because there is always in it an alloy of sense or wisdom, and the latter may be as much a motive or an incentive to laughter as pure nonsense if the circumstances favour it. Humour exists only in man, not in nature, and is, in fact, so peculiar to him that it has been defined as one of the three most characteristically human attributes. It results from his peculiar nature and half-knowledge, and if his intelligence were perfect humour would disappear. Laughter is a sort of involuntary misbehaviour, not only in church, but in whatever circumstances it is discovered, and would be impossible if we saw everything truly. This admittedly whimsical view may be better understood if we observe the unpleasant contortions of feature in a number of men who are laughing from some cause unknown to us. For nothing seems to the sober man of reason more asinine and unaccountable than the gestures and expressions of laughter, and by no thinking can he conjecture for himself any adequate cause or explanation until the jest or occasion is communicated to him, when immediately he will be possessed by the same ludicrous and irresistible spasm, although he will afterwards again, possibly, feel ashamed of the impulse.

Humour, and wit also, seeing that it incites to laughter, is at once expressive of man's higher and lower nature, inasmuch as it is only possible by a combination or collision of them. It is by reason of his superior intelligence that he can discover congruities or incongruities in unlikely and improper places, and because he is not intelligent enough not to laugh at them that he is able to discover in himself this emotion. Its appeal is to his lower passions, but it is, paradoxically, only through his higher powers that he is able to apprehend it. He laughs at his own capacity to laugh, and because he should not. Thus it indicates his level, and what a man laughs at is, as George Eliot has remarked, a test of his culture. It has been observed by several metaphysicians—among whom may be mentioned Hobbes—that there is in laughter a sudden realisation of superiority to the thing laughed at; but it does not appear to have been pointed out that in relation to a still higher state of culture or intelligence it also discovers and is a confession of inferiority. This latent duality of the nature of humour is further suggested in the well-known near relation of humour to pathos or laughter to tears. A touch will transmute the one into the other because they both exist only in a state of relative equilibrium. An entire deficiency in the sense of humour, nevertheless, does not argue usually a lofty culture, for it is only through the grosser element of humour that a man escapes and rises, stepping upon his dead self, to higher things; and his total deficiency in all kinds of humour may be due to a kind of constitutional phlegm or lack of imagination, although in some cases, as in that of Wordsworth, who was notoriously wanting in humour, it may arise from an absorption in other alien emotions and interests. The pursuit of science, however, by no means blunts the sensibility to the humorous, as may be witnessed, for instance, in Darwin, who, although finding in later years that his appreciation of beauty in poetry was greatly diminished, preserved a keen relish of humour, reading "Pickwick" and Mark Twain to the last; whereas Mark Twain somewhat oddly, although quite naturally, according to the explanation which has been given, read Carlyle's "French Revolution." What difference poetry makes to the appreciation of humour it would be curious to inquire, but that it does not atrophy the sense is proved by the fact that the majority of poets have been also wits. Much, however, depends upon the quality of the poetry and the humour, and we hardly look for humour in the works of such poets as Milton, Wordsworth, or even Shelley and Keats.

It is impossible, however, to go further into this

subject at present; and it was not intended to go into it exhaustively or to write a metaphysical dissertation, but only to record a few impressions of wit and humour in relation to laughter rather than in their relation to serious thought and philosophy and to each other. Humour, except in this relation, has no single quality, and is infinite in variety. Wit, too, varies in every character, and partakes of the wit's quality of thought and philosophy. One can easily distinguish the wit of Shakespeare, of Sterne, Swift, Dr. Johnson, Sheridan, Thackeray, Wilde, Whistler, Lewis Carroll, W. W. Jacobs, or G. B. Shaw. Wit as thought or wisdom is, in fact, infinite in its phases; but as wit and in terms of laughter, or, if we will, as folly, it is the same in all times and at all places and seasons.

F. H. M.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

Abstract of the proceedings April 19, Dr. S. F. Harmer, M.A., F.R.S., Vice-President, in the chair.

On behalf of Mr. Oldfield Thomas, F.R.S., F.Z.S., two specimens of the following new monkey from the Malay Peninsula were exhibited:—*PRESBYTIS ROBINSONI*, sp. n. Upper surface wholly white, scarcely relieved by a slight admixture of darker hairs. Underside, hands, and feet darker, greyish or greyish brown, varying in tone, but always darker than the crown and back. *Hab.*: Trang, Malay Peninsula. *Type*: Adult male in British Museum. Original number 3184. Collected by H. C. Robinson, Esq., and presented by the Government of the Federated Malay States. On behalf of the same gentleman, a further consignment of small mammals from China, collected by Mr. Malcolm Anderson for the Duke of Bedford's exploration of Eastern Asia, was exhibited, and attention drawn to their value for the furtherance of zoological and geographical science. The following forms were described as new:—*MYOTIS MYOSOTIS ANCILLA*, Subsp. n. Smaller and with shorter ears than true *myosotis*. General colour drab. Forearm of type 61mm. *Hab.*: Shang-chow, S.E. Shen-si. *Type*: Male. Original number 2082. *MICROTUS NUX*, sp. n. Allied to *M. inez*, but darker and with a longer tail; 2nd and 3rd spaces of m^3 united. Head and body 93 mm.; tail 39; hind foot 16.5. *Hab.*: Shang-chow, S.E. Shen-si. *Type*: Male. Original number 2089. *MICROTUS JOHANNES*, sp. n. Allied to *M. mandarinus*, but with smaller skull. Colour wood-brown instead of drab. Head and body 95 mm.; tail 23; hind foot 17. Condylol-basal length of skull 24.6. *Hab.*: N.W. of Ko-lan-chow, Shan-si. *Type*: Male. B.M. No. 9.1.1.178.

Mr. J. Lewis Bonhote, M.A., F.L.S., F.Z.S., exhibited a yellow variety of *Mus rattus*. This individual had been bred from two wild-caught examples of *Mus rattus tectorum* from Egypt. The long hairs on the upper parts, which are normally black, were colourless, and the shorter body-hairs had grey bases with yellow tips. As far as he knew, this was the first recorded example of a yellow rat, which was a colour quite unknown to fanciers and was never met with by Crampe or Doncaster, who had conducted colour-breeding experiments on rats. Although it was not definitely stated, these experiments had probably been carried out with *Mus norvegicus*. A careful search through the large series of *Mus rattus* in the British Museum also failed to bring to light any yellow forms. The same gentleman read a paper on the variations of *Mus rattus*, founded on an examination of the forms of that species found in Egypt. The author pointed out that on examination of the hind-foot measurements of a considerable number he found that the curve showed three distinct apices, and that two of these apices belonged respectively to the two forms found in Egypt, these forms being also more easily distinguished by their colour characteristics. Mr. Bonhote, in dealing with rats of this species from the Oriental region, had some years ago subdivided them into three subgroups, and it was now shown that the size of the feet typical of the three Oriental subgroups corresponded with

the three apices in the curve of the Egyptian forms. The author was inclined to think that these apices represented centres of variation and were probably inherited as Mendelian characters, for were this not the case the smallest apex would have become swamped and a regular curve would result. It was, however, evident that the small foot character was present and ready to become the dominant form in a very short time should conditions giving advantage to a small foot arise. On comparing the curve of the hind feet of *Mus norvegicus*, three apices were also observed, showing that in this species the "hind foot character" was also present, but as there were no corresponding colour differences it was impossible to tell to which group any particular individual belonged. The author drew the following conclusion, viz., that there was considerable *prima facie* evidence that the size of the hind foot and the colour of the hairs on the underparts were Mendelian characters, and pointed out that the former character was also found in another species, *Mus norvegicus*, and the latter in a third species, *Mus musculus*. On the presumption that these were true Mendelian characters a clearer understanding was at once gained as to how species might very quickly adapt themselves to altered conditions, and how many very closely allied species, differing only in size or in some definite but slight alteration of colour, could exist in the same locality and yet maintain their characteristics intact and show no merging of the one into the other. Experiments in breeding the different forms were being undertaken, but they were not as yet sufficiently advanced to permit of any definite results being stated.

Centenary of Philip Henry Gosse, F.R.S.
Born April 6, 1810; died August 23, 1888.

The Secretary exhibited the set of the works of Philip Henry Gosse in the Society's library and gave a brief summary of his contributions to science, upon which he placed a very high value. The Chairman and Prof. A. Sedgwick, F.R.S., added their testimony to his place in Zoological history; Dr. Henry Woodward, F.R.S., gave some personal reminiscences; and Mr. Edmund Gosse, Librarian of the House of Lords, the son and biographer of Gosse, thanked the Society for their notice of his father's centenary.

Mr. G. E. Bullen presented a paper, communicated by Mr. John Hopkinson, F.Z.S., "On an Example of Posterior Dichotomy in an Aylesbury Duckling," giving a detailed account of a dissection performed on a duckling having supernumerary legs. In addition to a reduplicated pelvis and the usual condition of the limbs presented in posterior dichotomy, it was found that the specimen showed evidence of a further reduplication of the part dichotomised.

Dr. W. T. Calman, F.Z.S., communicated a paper by Mr. Stanley Kemp, B.A., entitled "Notes on the Photophores of Decapod Crustacea."

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL.

PRECIS of communications made at the monthly general meeting of April 6:—

1. "Review of Our Knowledge of the Oriental Diptera." By E. Brunetti. Communicated by Dr. Annandale. The paper in question is a comparison between our present knowledge of the Oriental diptera and that possessed by entomologists at the date of Van der Wulp's "Catalogue of South Asiatic Diptera" (1896).

2. "Rasiapaāsana." By S. P. V. Ranganathasvami Aryavaraguru. "Rasiapaāsana," a rare Prakrit work, newly brought to light by Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Haraprasad Sastri, M.A., and deposited in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, contains 400 verses, together with 46 more verses added at the end. These 46 extra verses might also be the composition of the author himself. The work is complete, and contains only 400 verses in one

and the same metre, Gāthā. The verses were not collected by the author, but are his own composition. The author of the work is one Vairocana, a Buddhist, as is evident from his first invoking Buddha at the commencement of the work, and also from some more points. The first verse is an invocation to Buddha. The next verse invokes Rānarānaka or Manmadha. The third is an invocation to Lokeshvara and Manmadha at the same time, the verse having a double interpretation. The verses in the work were grouped according to different subjects, as, for instance, Nāyaka, Nāyikā, Dūti, etc.; but it is very difficult to point out where the one ends and the other begins, as there is neither a commentary to the work nor a complete Sanskrit Chāyā. The work was composed by the author at the request of his friends, as will be seen from one of his own verses. It is not possible to fix the date of either the poet or his composition, for the poet does not seem to be known to any other scholar, and he does not quote the names of any of his predecessors in his work. There is a verse in the extra verses at the end in which the author refers to a king. It must evidently be a reference to a contemporary king of his, probably his patron; but the letters composing the name of the king are illegible. So this verse does not help us to determine the age of the poet. From a few of his verses—the ideas for which he borrowed from other poets—we may conclude the poet to be not prior to the dramatist Visākhadatta, the author of "Mudrārākshasa." In order of merit the composition should be assigned a place inferior to that of "Gāthā Saptasati" and "Sétubandha." But yet the work is not wanting in attracting the attention of the reader, for there are some verses with strikingly new ideas illustrating the high imaginative power of the author. The poet is also skilful in Chitra Kavitva. The work is an important addition to Prakrit literature.

3. "Vocabulary of Technical and Sporting Terms in Urdu, Persian, and Arabic." By Lieut.-Colonel D. C. Phillott.

4. "A Discovery of a Long Metre in Prabodhachandrodaya." By V. V. Sovani. Communicated by the Philological Secretary.

5. "A Chemical Examination of the Butter-fat of the Indian Buffalo." By E. R. Watson, Monohar Gupta and Satish Chandra Ganguli.

6. "King Gopi Chandra of Rungpur." By Bisveswar Bhattacharjee. The author of this paper says that he has collected songs relating to King Gopi Chandra, his father Manik Chandra, and mother Mynāmāti, still extant in the Rungpore district, and observes that the ballad published by Dr. Grierson in the Asiatic Society's Journal in 1878 (Vol. XLVII.) is but an abridged version of the old Rungpore epic, with its numerous episodes.

7. "Ladvagar Gyalrabs, the Chronicles of Ladakh, according to Schlagintweit's manuscripts." Translated by Rev. A. H. Francke. Mr. Francke gives us an English translation of the first two chapters of the *Ladvagar Gyalrabs*, or "Chronicles of Ladakh." These chapters were translated into German by Schlagintweit, and published under the title of "Die Könige von Tibet." This translation was, however, very far from perfect, and Mr. Francke has based his English version on the Tibetan text which Schlagintweit appended to his German translation. In his Introduction Mr. Francke gives an interesting sketch of the origin and development of Tibetan historical literature.

8. "Two Buddhist Stone Images from Malda." By A. K. Maitra. A description of two Buddhist stone images recently discovered in Mahibhinta, near Pandua. One is a Buddha in the *Bhumispārsha Mudra* posture. It bears no inscription, but has certain peculiarities which are of interest to students of Buddhist iconography. The other image bears an inscription testifying to the superiority of the Buddha's teaching. The principal figure represents the Bodhisatvá Lokanātha, who is seated in the posture called *Lalitakṣepa*.

9. "*Chondrodonta bosei*, a New Species of Fossil Lamelli-branch from the Hippurite-bearing Beds of Seistan." By

Ernest W. Vredenburg. The first bivalve mollusc described in the Records of the Geological Survey xxxviii, Part 3, proves to be a *Chondrodonta*, here named *Chondrodonta bosi*.

10. "Palaeontological Notes on the Gangamopteris Beds of Khunmu, in Kashmir." By Hem Chandra Das-Gupta. Communicated by Mr. C. S. Middlemiss. On a visit to Khunmu, in Kashmir, remains of a Palaeoniscid and an Ichthyod oralite fish were found, which are briefly described.

11. "Contributions to the History and Ethnology of North-Eastern India." By H. E. Stapleton. This paper deals with the coinage of Assam in its relation to the history of Assam, as given in the *Buranjis*. The chief materials on which it is based are (a) the find of nearly 1,000 coins in 1906 at the Daflating Tea Garden, near Jorhat, in Assam; (b) the cabinet of Assamese coins in the possession of Mr. A. W. Botham, C.S.; (c) the recent catalogue of Assamese coins in the British Museum published in the *Numismatic Chronicle* by Mr. J. Allan; and (d) the writer's own collection of Assamese coins. These enable a complete conspectus of Assamese Numismatics to be obtained for the first time, and the bearings of the coin legends on Assamese history as generally accepted is fully discussed. A considerable number of previously unknown Assamese coins are described and figured, and a plate of the Ahom characters found on the earlier Assamese coins is also given.

12. "Cause of the Dismemberment of the Maurya Empire." By Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri. Vincent Smith, in his work on Asoka, is at a loss to find the causes of the downfall of the Maurya Empire. But these are plain from a careful perusal of the Asoka Inscriptions, along with Indian Literature. While professing toleration to the professors of various religions, Asoka wanted to take away all the privileges of the Brahmanas. (1) He prohibited animal sacrifice throughout his empire. (2) He reduced their gods to the position of false gods; (3) he insisted upon equality of punishment and equality of the privileges in law suits of all his subjects, thereby taking away all the privileges of the Brahmanas; (4) he appointed superintendence of morals, thereby taking away all the social influences of the Brahmanas. All this made the Brahmanas discontented, and they conspired to overthrow his empire. Pushyamitra, a Brahminist and a persecutor of the Buddhists, overthrew the empire within forty years after the death of Asoka, and performed a horse sacrifice at Pataliputra, perhaps in the place of Asoka. His daughter-in-law gave a large monthly grant in gold to learned Brahmanas teaching shastras. From Mricchkatik we learn that a revolution was accomplished as soon as a Brahmana was sentenced to capital punishment by a king belonging to the Asoka school of equal punishment.

13. "Discovery of the Abhisamayalankara Sāstra, by Maitrayanatha." By Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri. The commentary to the Pragnāpāramita of 8,000 slokas is called "Abhisamayalankaravaloka," that is based on Abhisamayalankara. But what is Abhisamayalankara? After thirty years' search the work has been found at the beginning of manuscripts of Pragnāpāramita, of which there are three in the Asiatic Society's Library. The work is in verse by Maitreyanatha, who is regarded in China not as an historical, but as a hypothetical being. The discovery of this work proves him to be an historical personage. The 25,000 pages were four times translated before the eighth century. The Chinese translators thought Abhisamaya to be an integral part of the 25,000 pages. But the only Indian translator Kumar Agiva did not translate it. This had led Nanjio to make a curious statement in the Chinese translations by Chinese scholars—namely, "with the First Chapter on." It means nothing, for the 25,000 pages have only eight chapters, and this is an extra chapter. The earliest Chinese translations are between 265 to 307 A.D. Maitreyanātha must have flourished before that time. But he must have lived after Nagaryuna, the real writer of 8,000 slokas (A.D. 125).

LINNEAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

General Meeting, April 21, Dr. D. H. Scott, M.A., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

Mr. John Hopkinson, F.L.S., exhibited eight coloured plates in quarto, of British Nudibranchs, which will be shortly issued by the Ray Society, and explained that they were from drawings by Messrs. Alder and Hancock. Prof. Dendy and the Rev. T. R. R. Stebbing commented on these illustrations.

The Rev. T. R. R. Stebbing drew attention to a "Witch-knot" or "Witch-broom" on a Spruce Fir, *Picea excelsa*, Link, from Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey, where it had been detected by his nephew, Mr. William D. P. Stebbing. A discussion followed in which Mr. A. D. Cotton, Mr. H. W. Monckton, Treasurer and Vice-President, Prof. F. W. Oliver, Mr. John Hopkinson, and the President took part.

The first paper, communicated by Prof. H. H. W. Pearson, F.L.S., was by Miss M. G. Sykes, of Girton College, and Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge, entitled "The Anatomy of *Welwitschia mirabilis*, in the Seedling and Adult Stages," of which the following is an abstract:—The development of the ridges bearing inflorescences has been studied. The outer ridges originate as two small projections between the margins of the cotyledon bases; the accelerated growth producing the two projections then spreads laterally, and forms two elongated ridges. Similar meristematic growth, at the base of the cotyledonary buds, produces the inner ridges. In the developing ridge a concentric ring of bundles is differentiated; these and the bundles supplying the inflorescences are composed entirely of secondary elements, and are later prolonged downwards to join the four concentric groups of vascular tissue in the hypocotyl. These four concentric groups form the most characteristic features of the transition, they suggest comparison with the Medullosæ. The main features of the transition are most like *Araucaria*, the resemblance is probably dependent on habit. There are also points of resemblance to the Cycads; centripetal xylem is developed in connection with the cotyledonary bundles. Several abnormalities are described. On the whole, the investigation has served further to confirm the impression of the aberrant nature of the plant; it may indeed be described as an "adult seedling." Mr. T. G. Hill and the President offered additional observations, and Miss Sykes replied.

The four following papers were briefly summarised by Prof. Dendy, Sec.L.S.; they form part of the reports on the Percy Sladen Expedition to the Indian Ocean:—2. Prof. P. Stein.—Die von Mr. Hugh Scott im Juli 1908—März 1909 auf den Seychellen gesammelten Anthomyide, mit den Gattungen *Rhinia* und *Idiella*. (Communicated by Prof. J. Stanley Gardiner, F.R.S., F.L.S.) 3. Dr. Malcolm Burr, F.L.S., F.E.S.—The Dermaptera of the Seychelles. 4. Dr. J. J. Tesch.—The Pteropoda and Heteropoda collected by the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition in the Indian Ocean. (Communicated by Prof. J. Stanley Gardiner, F.R.S., F.L.S.) 5. Dr. G. Enderlein.—Die Pflanzmücken Fauna der Seychellen. (Communicated by the same.)

CORRESPONDENCE

"VOX STELLARUM."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Some people have a natural gift for believing improbable things. For myself, contact with an unfeeling world has done something to destroy in me the simple belief in the veracity of mankind as a whole that a country youth naturally possesses. Experience has developed in me a somewhat materialistic outlook, and on any phenomena I exercise a critical faculty which asks: "Are the results reasonable and such as will benefit humanity?" This simple inquiry has greatly kept in check any tendency I might have towards believing in table-tilting by spirits, the playing of tambourines

and accordions by departed prophets at séances, and so forth. When I can see manifestations from another world which are such as could be looked for from the mighty ones of the past and some real help given to men and women with present-day problems to face, then I will listen to these would-be teachers.

It was my lot some years ago to meet on a business matter a gentleman who claimed to have great skill in forecasting events—personal, commercial, and national—by means of astrological calculations. In this line, I think I may say, he has an international reputation. The interview resulted in my seeing a certain master printer, with a view to interesting him in a proposed publication. As soon as he knew the scope of the matter he spoke somewhat as follows: "Let me give you one word of advice. If this business is in connection with any of those astrological fellows be sure and get cash with order. You must have cash in advance or you will get left. I get lots of business offered me by these same people, but I know them, and I will not depart from that rule. They profess to tell a man's lucky days, to advise a man when to buy shares, when to sell, which horses will win at the races, when to go on certain journeys, when to get married, and so on; but, believe me, it is all nonsense. If they could do a quarter of the things they profess they would have no occasion to ask me to do their printing on credit. They would have all the money they need. They would only require to convince one business man on the Stock Exchange that they knew how to foretell the rise and fall of stocks and shares, and they would immediately find hundreds of people willing to pay heavily for the same sort of information—and, further, if their information was worth anything they would not sell it. They are not that sort of people. They give nothing away under any circumstances. They would keep the information and use it for their own purposes, and become immensely rich and powerful."

Since then I have acted pretty generally on these words of advice. I am not outside the reach of new ideas, but, as a preliminary, I must see a physical groundwork of some kind for what I am asked to believe in, and I must understand to a little extent the how, and why, and wherefore of the claims made before I can accept them.

D. R. W.

"ANNALS OF PSYCHICAL SCIENCE."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to make a correction in Mr. George Phillips's interesting letter in your last issue? The *Annals of Psychical Science* is not published by the Psychical Research Society, but is an entirely independent quarterly magazine.

DUDLEY WRIGHT, Editor.

110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.

"FUTURE" AND "APPARENT."

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—Would "A French Linguist" kindly state why in an expression such as the following, where past, not future, time is involved, the tense is described as "future": "Readers of THE ACADEMY will have noticed in last Saturday's issue," etc.? Would your correspondent also be obliging enough to give his opinion as to whether the adjective "apparent" be grammatically correct as used in the ordinary bill of lading form, commencing "Shipped in apparent good order," etc.?

CLERK.

BOOKS RECEIVED

MISCELLANEOUS

- Kant's Ethics and Schopenhauer's Criticism.* By M. Kelly, M.A., M.D. Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 2s. 6d.
- Stained Glass from the Earliest Period to the Renaissance.* A Paper read before the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society, March 2, 1910. By Herbert W. Bryans. J. Parker and Co., Oxford. 1s. net.
- Mothers' Union Work—a Vocation.* By Mrs. T. F. Palmer, with a Preface by the Bishop of Durham. H. R. Allenson. 1s. net.
- The Americans' Mecca: Paris and the Beautiful Land of France.* By Philip J. S. Richardson, with a chapter on the Riviera by Eustace A. Reynolds-Ball, F.R.G.S. Illustrated. T. M. Middleton and Co. 1s. 6d. net.
- Electricity Applied to Light and Power.* A Treatise on the Application of Electric Current to every Phase of Country House and Estate Requirements. Drake and Gorham. 1s. 6d.
- The Professional Aunt.* By Mrs. George Wemyss. Illustrated by Balliol Salmon. Constable and Co. 5s.

- A Year's Dinners: 365 Seasonable Dinners with Instructions for Cooking. A Handy Guide-Book for Worried Housekeepers.* By May Little. T. Werner Laurie. 6s. net.
- Anthologie des Prosateurs Français Contemporains. Tome I. Les Romanciers (1850 à nos jours).* By Georges Pellissier. Ch. Delagrave, Paris. 3 frs. 50 c.
- Das Erkennen und die Werturteile.* By Dr. Hermann Lüdemann. M. Heinsius Nachfolger, Leipzig. 6 marks.
- Cabbages.* By Horace J. Wright, F.R.H.S. London Agricultural and Horticultural Association. 1d.
- Record of Sports.* 7th Edition. Royal Insurance Co., Liverpool.
- Old-Lore Miscellany of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, and Sutherland.* Vol. III. Part II. With Index to Vol. II. Printed for the Viking Club. 2s. 6d.
- The Wye.* Painted by Sutton Palmer. Described by A. G. Bradley. A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d. net.
- Modern Art at Venice, and other Notes.* By A. E. G. J. M. Bowles, New York.
- The Usage of "Idem," "Ipse," and Words of Related Meaning.* By Clarence L. Meader. University of Michigan Studies. Macmillan Co., New York.

HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

- Robert Dodsley, Poet, Publisher and Playwright.* By Ralph Straus. Illustrated. John Lane. 2ls. net.
- The Riders of the Plains: A Record of the Royal North-West Mounted Police of Canada, 1873-1910.* By A. L. Haydon. Illustrated. Andrew Melrose. 10s. 6d. net.
- Trial of Oscar Slater.* Edited by William Roughead, Writer to the Signet. Illustrated. William Hodge and Co., Edinburgh. 5s. net.
- The Myth of Hercules at Rome.* By John Garrett Winter. University of Michigan Studies. Macmillan Co., New York.
- A History of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta.* By George Longridge, B.A. Revised and Abridged by W. H. Hutton, B.D. With a Preface by the Right Rev. Edward Stuart Talbot, D.D. Illustrated. A. R. Mowbray and Co. 2s. 6d. net.

EDUCATIONAL

- The Public School Vocalist.* By Alexander Adamson, F.R.I.S. Parts I. and II. Aird and Coghill, Glasgow. 1d. each.
- Ovid-Heroides I-X, Text and Notes.* Edited by A. J. F. Collins, M.A. and B. J. Hayes, M.A. W. B. Clive, University Tutorial Press. 3s. 6d.
- Shelley: Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats, Author of "Endymion," "Hyperion," etc.* Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by A. R. Weekes, B.A. W. B. Clive, University Tutorial Press. 1s. 6d.
- Handwork as an Educational Medium, and other Essays.* By P. B. Ballard, M.A. Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 2s. 6d. net.

FICTION

- Memorial Edition of the Works of George Meredith.—11, 12.* Beauchamp's Career 2 vols. Illustrated. Constable and Co. 7s. 6d. net each.
- A Marriage under the Terror.* By Patricia Wentworth. Andrew Melrose. 6s.
- The Power of the Keys.* By Sydney C. Grier. Wm. Blackwood and Sons. 1s. net.
- Paul Musgrave.* By Oswald Wildridge. Ward, Lock and Co. 6s.
- The Vacillations of Hazel.* By Mabel Barnes-Grundy. J. W. Arrowsmith, Bristol. 6d.
- Stand and Deliver! The Adventures of a Clever Woman.* By Gertrude Warden. F. V. White and Co. 6s.
- Love in the Byways. Some Last-Night Stories.* By Algernon Gissing. F. V. White and Co. 6s.
- The Blood Bond.* By Captain Henry Curties. F. V. White and Co. 6s.

VERSE

- The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney.* Edited with an Introduction by John Drinkwater. (The Muses' Library.) George Routledge and Sons.
- Out of Hours: Poems, Lyrics and Sonnets.* By J. M. Stuart-Young. Arthur Stockwell. 4s. net.

PERIODICALS

- The Oxford and Cambridge Review; The Manchester Quarterly; The Book Monthly; St. Nicholas; Propos; Cambridge University Reporter; Revue Bleue; Le Français Fondé; Gunter's Magazine; People's Magazine; Popular Magazine; Cornhill Magazine; Everybody's Story Magazine; Girl's Own Paper and Woman's Magazine; Boy's Own Paper; Sunday at Home; Friendly Greetings.*

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